

Message Text

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S E C R E T HELSINKI 2419

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PCAT, PARM, US, UR
SUBJ: US-SOVIET CAT: REPORTING CABLE ON THIRD MEETING OF REGIONAL
WORKING GROUP - JULY 26, 1978

REF: HELSINKI 2384 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: THIRD MEETING OF REGIONAL WORKING GROUP PRODUCED
SOVIET STATEMENT THAT US PROPOSAL FOR US AND SOVIET STEPS TO
ENCOURAGE REGIONAL RESTRAINT IN LATIN AMERICAN AND SUB-
SAHARAN AFRICA (SSA) WOULD HAVE TO BE RESOLVED AT HIGHER
POLITICAL LEVEL IN MOSCOW. US PRESENTATION ON SSA URGED
PARALLEL US-SOVIET DEMARCHE TO STIMULATE RECIPIENT INTEREST
IN REGIONAL RESTRAINT, NOTED GROWING ARMS RACE IN REGION
(AND SOVIET ROLE IN THAT REGARD), AND DISCUSSED APPLICABILITY
OF CERTAIN US MILITARY/TECHNICAL CRITERIA TO REGION.
SOVIET RESPONSE WAS LIMITED TO QUESTIONS FOCUSSED ON ROLE
OF SOUTH AFRICA IN REGION. END SUMMARY.

1. SOVIET CHAIRMAN KUZNETSOV BEGAN WITH A FEW REMARKS
ON LATIN AMERICA. HE ADDED THAT US PROPOSAL FOR BILATERAL
US-SOVIET STATEMENT ENDORSING AYACUCHO AND MEXICAN INITIA-
TIVES WAS MATTER FOR HIGHER POLITICAL LEVELS AND NOT

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PART OF OUR JOB IN HELSINKI. IN APPARENT ATTEMPT TO
REBUT US ACCOUNT OF SOVIET TRANSFERS TO PERU,
KUZNETSOV MADE EXTENDED PRESENTATION OF PERUVIAN ROLE
IN INITIATING 1974 AYACUCHO DECLARATION. HE CONCLUDED
BY ASKING (1) WHETHER PROPOSED POLITICAL/LEGAL CRI-
TERION TO BAN TRANSFERS TO HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATORS
WOULD PROHIBIT TRANSFERS TO CHILE, EVEN THOUGHT MILI-

TARY/TECHNICAL CRITERIA MIGHT PERMIT THEM, AND (2) WHETHER ARMS TRANSFERS IN PIPELINE TO CHILE WOULD BE HALTED IF US AND SOVIETS AGREED ON CRITERIA. MATHEWS SAID WHATEVER CRITERIA WE AGREED TO WOULD BE APPLIED SIMULTANEOUSLY, WITH DISAGREEMENTS ON THEIR APPLICATION RESOLVED THROUGH CONSULTATIVE MECHANISM. PIPELINE WE SAW AS FUTURE TOPIC FOR DISCUSSION, BUT NOTED THAT FULL EXCHANGE OF DATE WOULD BE NECESSARY IN ORDER TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM. PERUVIAN ROLE IN DEVELOPMENT OF AYACUCHO INITIATIVE, SAID MATHEWS, SUPPORTED CASE FOR SOVIET ENCOURAGEMENT OF THIS INITIATIVE.

2. MATHEWS THEN MADE US PRESENTATION ON SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA (SSA) BEGINNING WITH DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED APPROACH BY US AND SOVIET UNION TO MEMBER STATES OF OAU TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO BEGIN WORKING AMONG THEMSELVES ON A RESTRAINT AGREEMENT AMONG RECIPIENT STATES. IN PARALLEL (BUT NOT JOINT) DEMARCHES US AND SOVIET UNION MIGHT SUGGEST TO ONE OR TWO OF THESE STATES THE IDEA OF ORGANIZING A REGIONAL CONFERENCE TO DISCUSS THE PROBLEM. MATHEWS CONCLUDED WITH HOPE THAT AT THIS ROUND US AND SOVIET UNION COULD AT LEAST AGREE ON NEED FOR SUCH AN APPROACH, LEAVING DETAILS TO BE SETTLED THROUGH BILATERAL DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS.

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3. MATHEWS TURNED TO A BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE RAPID GROWTH OF ARMS TRANSFERS TO SSA IN THE PASS FIVE YEARS. SHE EMPHASIZED THE SOVIET ROLE IN THIS INCREASE, NOT ONLY WITH REGARD TO QUANTITY, BUT ALSO WITH REGARD TO THE INTRODUCTION INTO THE REGION OF EQUIPMENT NOT PREVIOUSLY SUPPLIED. ALREADY, SHE SAID, THE US HAS RECEIVED REQUESTS FROM A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES INCLUDING KENYA, SUDAN, AND SOMALIA FOR ARMS TO REDRESS THE REGIONAL IMBALANCE, CREATED BY EXCESSIVE SOVIET SUPPLY.

4. MATHEWS GAVE ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES OF THE WAY IN WHICH US DRAFT MIL/TECHNICAL CRITERIA NO'S 5 (NO FIRST INTRODUCTION), 6 (NO CREATION OF IMBALANCE), AND 8 (NO IMPEDIMENT TO PEACEFUL RESOLUTION) WOULD BE APPLIED. PRESENTATION STRESSED NEED TO KEEP HIGH PERFORMANCE, ADVANCED SYSTEMS OUT OF THE REGIONS AS WELL AS IMPORTANCE OF GIVING PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF CONFLICTS A CHANCE, AS IN NAMIBIA AND RHODESIA.

5. SOVIET CHAIRMAN KUZNETSOV SAID THAT US PROPOSAL ON POLICITIC/DIPLOMATIC STEPS TO BE TAKEN BY THE US AND SOVIET UNION IN SSA WOULD BE TRANSMITTED TO SOVIET

GOVERNMENT AND THAT ANY DECISION ON SUCH A TOPIC WOULD HAVE TO BE MADE AT HIGHER LEVEL THAN SOVIET CAT DELEGATION. HE ASKED US VIEW OF PROBABLE REACTION OF FRONTLINE STATES TO SUCH A PROPOSED DEMARCHE.

6. KUZNETSOV SAID THAT US PRESENTATION REQUIRED SERIOUS STUDY, BUT THAT FIRST SOVIET REACTION WAS TO ASK A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS. THOSE QUESTIONS RELATED TO SOUTH AFRICAN PARTICIPATION IN AND EFFECT ON RESTRAINT EFFORTS IN THE REGION, ESPECIALLY WITH REGARD TO THE FRONTLINE STATES.

7. IN CONCLUSION, MATHEWS PROMISED TO RESPOND TO SOVIET QUESTIONS IN FINAL WORKING GROUP SESSION JULY 27,
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AND REITERATED THAT US SIDE HAD HOPED FOR PRESENTATION OF SOVIET VIEW ON APPLICATION OF POL/LLEGAL CRITERIA FOR SSA. KUZNETSOV SAID THAT IN FINAL WORKING GROUP SESSION SOVIET SIDE WOULD GIVE ITS EVALUATION OF SITUATION IN AFRICA AND WOULD TOUCH ON SOME OTHER REGIONS AS WELL.
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